

CHAPTER 143. MONITOR COCKPIT VOICE RECORDERS

SECTION 1. BACKGROUND

1. PROGRAM TRACKING AND REPORTING SUBSYSTEM (PTRS) ACTIVITY CODES.

A. Maintenance:

- Ramp Inspection: 3627
- Spot Inspection: 3628
- Cockpit En Route Inspection: 3629

B. Avionics:

- Ramp Inspection: 5627
- Spot Inspection: 5628
- Cockpit En Route Inspection: 5629

3. OBJECTIVE. This chapter provides guidance in monitoring cockpit voice recorders (CVR) during spot, ramp, and cockpit en route inspections.

5. GENERAL. The Federal Aviation Regulations require that certain aircraft be equipped with a CVR that meets approved design and installation criteria. The regulations also stipulate that the data obtained from the CVR cannot be used in any civil penalty or certificate action.

NOTE: This does not negate the Aviation Safety Inspector's (ASI) authority and responsibility to monitor the CVR during the performance of air-worthiness surveillance functions.

A. The Avionics ASI is responsible for determining that the maintenance procedures ensure the following:

- An acceptable level of in-service operation of the CVR

- A quality of reproduction that will allow for the extraction of pertinent information in the event of an accident or incident

B. There are no restrictions in the regulations that preclude periodic monitoring of the CVR as a method of surveillance.

(1) ASI's are cautioned against monitoring CVR tapes for any purpose other than determining the quality of the recording.

(2) Monitoring should be done only to the extent necessary to determine that the quality of reproduction and maintenance of the CVR is adequate.

C. Acoustic Underwater Locator Beacon Maintenance.

(1) In order to ensure the timely activation of underwater acoustic beacons associated with CVR's, Avionics ASI's should evaluate their certificate holder's maintenance and inspection programs to ensure that procedures for testing beacons, conducted concurrently with battery replacement, provide for functionally testing the beacons prior to replacing the old battery.

(2) Operators' maintenance programs should also be evaluated to ensure that operational testing is being accomplished, consistent with the recorder or beacon manufacturer's recommended procedures, at specified intervals and when possible, in conjunction with a numbered or phase inspection, e.g., "A," "B," or "C," check.

(3) These requirements must be reflected on work cards or other inspection cards to ensure system-wide compliance.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

SECTION 2. PROCEDURES

1. PREREQUISITES AND COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS.

A. Prerequisites:

- Knowledge of the regulatory requirements of FAR Parts 91, 121/135, and 125, as applicable
- Experience with the equipment being inspected
- Successful completion of Airworthiness Inspector's Indoctrination Course for General Aviation and Air Carrier Inspections, or previous equivalent

B. Coordination. This task requires coordination with the operator.

3. REFERENCES, FORMS, AND JOB AIDS.

A. References:

- Order 8300.10, Vol. 3, Ch. 2, Conduct Spot Inspection of Operator's Aircraft, or Ch. 4, Conduct Cockpit En Route Inspection, as applicable

B. Forms:

- FAA Form 8430-13, Request To Access Aircraft

C. Job Aids. None.

5. PROCEDURES.

A. Initiate the Inspection. Reference Vol. 3, Chs. 2, 3, or 4, as applicable.

B. Monitor the CVR.

(1) If this task is being done as part of an en route inspection, obtain permission from the pilot-in-command before plugging into the CVR system.

(2) If this task is being done as part of a spot or ramp inspection, accomplish the following:

(a) Coordinate with the maintenance supervisor prior to conducting the inspection

(b) Monitor the in-progress maintenance to ensure that the CVR is being evaluated for performance of its intended function

NOTE: Be aware that not all phone jacks on CVR cockpit monitors are wired for operation.

(3) Check all channels to ensure that the quality of reproduction has not deteriorated below an optimal audible level.

(4) Monitor the Cockpit Area Microphone (CAM) to ensure that it satisfactorily picks up all cockpit audio.

NOTE: Be aware that the quality of reproduction of some CVR's can be affected by ground operation of auxiliary power units and ground power units.

(5) Review the certificate holder's maintenance procedures for acoustic underwater locator beacons to ensure that the manufacturer's recommendations are closely followed, including the procedures for the battery check.

C. Analyze Results. Refer to Vol. 3, Chs. 2, 3, or 4, as applicable.

7. TASK OUTCOMES.

A. File PTRS Data Sheet.

B. Refer to Vol. 3, Chs. 2, 3, or 4, as applicable.

9. FUTURE ACTIVITIES. Follow-up activities as required.

